

# Meeting Minutes for Asha Chennai on 4th Oct, 2020

Minutes of the meeting held via Google Meet on Sunday the 4th October 2020 at 9.30 AM

Following were logged in and participated

Bhaskar

Kasturi Easwaran

Madura Sugumar (Part of the time)

Paripoornam K

Rajaraman Krishnan (Co-ordinator)

Ramakrishnan

Sriram VS

Sujatha (Part of the time)

Sundaram R

Venkataraman Muthukrishnan

Usha Bhaskar

## 0. Ratification

The minutes of the Meeting held on September 2020 on Google Meet were ratified unanimously

## 1. Fund Raising

Rajaraman gave a broad picture of the donations made since the start of the vigorous pursuit of Fund Raising activity as an aftermath of the choking of funds by CSR Donors this year. .

Some of the highlights of his account were:

- a) There was a spike in funds received during the month. Asha Chennai received funds from the UK, US and India from individual donors.
- b) Deepak from Silicon Valley was in touch in the matter of fundraising. Asha SV in the USA also had arrangements with Adobe which enabled their employees to make donations from their payroll to it. This trail was being explored.  
  
Asha Pittsburgh is also being approached for active help. .Resorting to other platforms like Go Fund Me were also being looked into.
- c) A proposal for CSR funding from Kaleesuwari Refineries Pvt Ltd was being submitted.  
  
Ramakrishnan promised that he would follow up with L & T and Ford for possible CSR tie-up. Hyundai Mobius was also being approached.
- d) Venkat was making proposals for grants from HCL, Microsoft and Adobe.
- e) Asha Chennai was in the process of talking to a company (Chrysalis) which for a fee helped NGOs to effectively raise funds.
- f) Asha Chennai was pursuing Hyundai Glovis for remittance of the last tranche. Contact with the other erstwhile CSR Donor Trimble was being maintained.

## 2. Publicity

It is needless to stress that while going out to solicit funds it was essential that Asha Chennai reports, publicity materials, Flyers, banners should be up to date.

Stewards were requested to clean up the project page in Asha Chennai website.

Additionally, active use of Social Media Platforms like Facebook and Instagram should be made by posting videos, photos, blogs portraying what was being done like say in Mini schools, etc or events etc.

Project stewards should produce videos for their own projects. Ponkumar and Rajkumar will render necessary help if sought.

## 3. Accounting and Auditing

Bhaskar stated that all checklists had been approved and the money due had been brought over from Asha US treasury to Asha India. We will get this from Asha India as required.

Rajaraman pointed out the need for not delaying the completion of accounts 2019-20 anymore. Ramakrishnan replied there were discrepancies to be reconciled and hoped that the final accounts could be ready in one or two weeks. One of the tedious and time-consuming tasks was the segregation of the vouchers. To avoid or minimize such manual tasks it should be possible to think of workarounds with computer-based accounting.

In general, It was felt necessary to strengthen the handling of Accounts aspects of Asha Chennai by suitably inducting persons with domain expertise. It would be ideal to have one of the volunteers with knowledge of the latest computer-based accounting processes, standards and legal implications to handle this function exclusively. However, at the least Asha Chennai could look out for employing such a person.

Similarly, Asha Chennai might have to look at the question of appointing an auditor who is abreast of the latest requirements since many new acts and codes are being promulgated frequently by the government. Venkataraman and Ramakrishnan were requested to suggest such changes as required

#### **4. Mini Schools/Hybrid Schools**

There has been rapid progress in the growth of Minischools. There were 23 in Mid August'20, 45 in end of September'20 and will increase to 50+ shortly. It was heartening to note some teachers have spared one or two rooms in their own small houses to conduct Mini Schools Some have asked for BlackBoard painting in their houses which Srinivasan had arranged. Of course, it must be remembered that Mini Schools could not even cover 15 percent of the children whom we teach when schools were functioning normally.

Lead teachers are engaged in preparing Lesson Plans, Teaching Materials for these schools and are delivering them.

In addition to the mini-schools, Asha is also working with our regular school with a Hybrid Curriculum. In this process, worksheets are delivered to the children at their home by the teachers and are collected after completion of assignments at the doorstep. Whenever possible they are brought together to have contact classes.

#### **5. Training of Asha Teachers**

Rajaraman stated that IIT Bombay Training in Geogebra, Python and HTML for Asha Teachers are over.

Venkat informed that Special English Training for Teachers will be over in week. An evaluation test was being carried out purely to assess the benefits of this intensive course.

Paripoornam intimated that Gender Equity training was expected to be over by End November.

Rajaraman stated that Training in Maths by Meena Suresh, Computer Training by Kumari would continue. In addition, he would be starting Training in Trigonometry.

#### **6. Receipts for Funds Received.**

Venkataraman explained that a new system of issuing formal receipts for funds received through various channels like Eventurbo, Net Banking etc. has been started from the month of Sept. It was suggested that an email acknowledgment could be given as soon as it is known that fund transfer has been initiated by the donor.

#### **7. IIT Bombay Covid Impact Study Grant**

Prof Ramkumar and Prof Ritayan of IIT Bombay have approached Asha Chennai to take part in a study to assess the impact of Covid19 on learning with school systems rendered shut. They are planning to apply for a grant from Azim Premji Univ to fund this study. This would be pursued.

#### **8. Spoken English Pilot Scheme.**

Rajaraman informed that he had been receiving expressions of interest from some particularly from the US to teach spoken English pro bono to aspiring young through Asha Chennai. After some discussion, it was decided to start a pilot scheme by choosing a few by Venkataraman from Asha Scholarship students and by Paripoornam from students covered by Tulasi Project and put them in touch with mentors who were now offering their services. .

#### **9. Welcome to New Volunteers**

Rajaraman and other volunteers present extended a warm welcome to Madura Sugumar, Sujatha Raman and Gomathi ( could not be present) for offering their services to be enlisted as Asha Chennai Volunteers.

Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to all present.